

DIARY NOTESExecutive Director-Comptroller

4 December 1965

1. I sat in on the Director's morning briefing, at which time we had a general discussion about keeping the President informed while he is at the ranch. The Director asked Walt Elder to look into one or two specific reports to determine when they actually reached the President. A more fundamental question was raised, however, about why we do not publish the President's Daily Brief on Sunday. On Monday, 6 December, I talked about this with Jack Smith, who had already been alerted that the Director was interested in this matter. Jack explained that the people who would prepare the Brief are on duty on Sunday and that it would pose no problem to publish one. However, we have not done so at the specific request of the White House staff. (I must ensure that some follow-up report is made to the Director.)

2. The Director was very concerned about the article by Evans and Novak in the Washington Post yesterday and told me that he had decided upon a course of action. He instructed me to assemble all the Deputies, their principal assistants, and Office Heads as a minimum in the auditorium at 10:15 a. m. on Monday morning, 6 December, at which time this general subject would be discussed. He also outlined to Walt Elder a number of items to be put in writing for his use at the meeting to support his belief that as Director of Central Intelligence he has accomplished a great deal. I expressed reservations about the wisdom of this procedure and suggested that he defer a final decision until Dick Helms and I had talked on Monday, which we had already agreed to do. The Director declined this suggestion. Immediately after our meeting with the Director, Walt and I telephoned Dick Helms and briefed him on what had transpired. I told Dick that the Director had said he would get in touch with him in the course of the day and that the Director expected him to make most of the remarks; the Director would make a few remarks at the conclusion of the meeting. I heard no more about this until mid-afternoon on Sunday, 5 December, when Dick telephoned me at home to say that he had just talked with the Director and that the Director did want to go ahead with the meeting. Dick asked me to make the necessary arrangements. He also said that the Director would do all the talking and that he would be merely an observer. I notified the Deputies and Office Heads that

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afternoon. About 8:15 a.m. on Monday morning, 6 December, the Director telephoned me in the office to ensure that all the arrangements had been made. I reviewed the arrangements with him and then said I remained convinced that he was making a mistake. I said I knew he felt that this was an attack on the Agency and that he was being used as the vehicle for the attack but that I was fearful his personal defense of his administration would be misinterpreted and he would lose rather than gain stature. I specifically said that, if I were making the decision, I would not permit him to go to the auditorium for this meeting. A few minutes later Dick Helms buzzed to say that the Director had ordered him to make the speech and that the Director would not appear. The meeting went well, and I thought that Dick's remarks constituted a masterpiece of subtlety which could hardly have been misunderstood.

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